

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## ***Introduction***

The Reno Public Art Master Plan outlines goals, objectives and implementation strategies to enhance and expand the public art program as administered by the City of Reno Arts and Culture Commission. The plan contains findings and recommendations, funding projections, public art ordinances and guidelines for the City and recommendations on program administration and staffing, as well as potential project areas.

The plan is a result of eight months of meetings, interviews with individuals, workshops for the public and for artists, focus groups, community presentations and extensive research. The planning process was overseen by the Public Art Master Plan Steering Committee, a body that was appointed by the City of Reno. The final plan captures the aims and intentions of the community and focuses on specific action steps for implementation.

## ***Why plan now?***

Recently, the City of Reno went through a Cultural Master Planning process. One of the recommendations that resulted was the creation of a Public Art Master Plan. This marks the realization of that recommendation.

Public art – art that is created with public involvement in its siting, content, context and creation – is most often successful when it results from the community’s engagement in the entire process by which it is created. Public art differs from “art in public places,” which is a piece or series of pieces that are created, then placed into a public arena without a direct relation to that public site, or to community interests, values and attitudes.

Public art can play a significant role in the visual and sociological development of communities. When done without proper thought and attention to community attitudes and feelings, it can be a controversial and sometimes divisive element in the community.

In order to create a successful Public Art Program, one that both reflects and enhances the community, it is important to go through an extensive and comprehensive planning process, which takes into account the views and attitudes of multitudes of persons, agencies and organizations from the entire community and area which the Public Art Program will ultimately affect.

## ***How will the Plan work?***

Every public art program requires great and ongoing vigilance to detail, to ensure that its administration is conducted in such a way as to meet the goals of the community. A successful program will, first and foremost, demand qualified staff. Without such staff in place, the plan’s recommendations will not be implemented.

## ***What are the Plan's recommendations?***

### Community Involvement

- Emphasize the creation of public artworks in neighborhoods throughout Reno and create opportunities in the Program for works that celebrate Reno. (page 23)
- Create a temporary works program, including an educational component. (page 24)
- Create an ad-hoc Outreach Subcommittee of the Public Art Committee, to specifically include representatives of Neighborhood Advisory Boards and minority populations. (page 24)
- Create public input phase(s) of all public art programs, to be administered by Reno Arts and Culture Division staff. (page 24)
- Begin a dialogue with the Washoe County School District, encouraging the provision of funding for a series of model public art projects in selected new schools as they are constructed. (page 24)

### Support for Artists

- Establish policies that produce a balance of projects by local, regional, national and international artists, with quality as the most important. (page 29)
- Update and publish, on an annual basis, the *Guide to Public Art in the Reno Area* manual and disseminate to a wider audience. (page 30)
- Explore partnerships with other entities in the community (UNR, Sparks, Washoe County) to identify or create venues in which artists can create larger or monumental works. (page 30)
- Provide seminars and workshops to educate local and regional artists in the Public Art field. (page 30)

### Funding

- Expand the current ordinance, stipulating that 2% of the annual capital improvement program budget be allocated for public art with the longer term goal of 1-2% of all private development. (page 33)

- Once the City Council has approved, on an annual basis, funds for the Public Art Program, those funds should be transferred to a separate Public Art Fund to be managed by the Reno Arts and Culture Commission. Where not limited by law or funding source, monies may be "pooled" and expended on any public art project in the City, consistent with the annual plan. (page 34)
- Advocate to extend the two percent for art requirement to include other entities such as Washoe County schools, Regional Transportation Commission, Airport Authority of Washoe County and UNR. (page 34)
- All City agencies and divisions should include a request for public art as a reimbursable expense in applications for outside funding for capital improvement projects, such as state or federal grants. (page 34)
- Establish an annual review of the Capital Improvement Program by the Public Art Committee of the Reno Arts and Culture Commission, which will recommend prioritized public art projects to City Council. Annual expenditures in the Public Art Program should continue to be approved by the City. (page 37)

### Leadership

- Seek and take advantage of opportunities for the Reno Arts and Culture Commission, Public Art Committee and local artists to make public presentations on public art to the general community, including neighborhood advisory boards. (page 38)
- Create partnerships with regional planning entities, including Washoe County, Regional Transportation Commission, Truckee Meadows Water Authority, City of Sparks and others. (page 38)

### Urban Design

- Future requests for proposals and contracts for major capital improvement project architects, engineers and landscape architects should include specific reference

to the public art program and the City's intention to encourage artist collaboration on the design team. (page 45)

- Consideration should be given to the creation of a City Urban Design Review Board that would initially have responsibility for reviewing the design of all major public and private capital projects. (page 46)
- Establish a design program that annually gives awards for outstanding design. (page 46)
- Create an internship program in the planning department, to hire artists. (page 46)

#### Process and Administration

- Hire and retain a full-time Public Art Specialist to administer and manage the entire Public Art Program. (page 50)
- Modify the City of Reno's capital budget request forms and instructions to ensure that the allocations for the 2% public art are included in every request for capital project funding. (page 50)
- 15% of the public art funds should be reserved in a segregated account for program administration (excluding staff, supported by the General Fund) and community participation, artist selection processes, community outreach and publicity, interpretive plaques, project documentation and other appropriate related purposes. (page 50)
- 10% of the public art funds, to the extent permitted by law and the funding sources, should be set aside in a separate interest-bearing account within the Public Art Fund for curatorial services and the preservation and maintenance of the public art collection. (page 50)
- Routine maintenance of public artworks should be the responsibility of the agency housing the artwork, in accordance with maintenance guidelines provided by the project artist. All non-routine maintenance should be the responsibility of the Reno Arts and Culture Commission. The Commission should conduct a maintenance survey of the

entire collection at least once every three years. (page 51)

- Change the name of the Art in Public Places Committee to the Public Art Committee. (page 51)

#### Private Development

- Consider development incentives and regulations that permit variations of building or lot standards (set-backs, floor area ratios, etc), in order to provide public art amenities. Projects using such development incentives would be more favorably supported during discretionary review, as advancing public art goals. The development standard trade-off could take place by the actual commissioning of on-site artworks or by a cash, in-lieu contribution to support public art elsewhere in the City or County. (page 55)
- Explore, at a future time, extending the percent for art requirement to all private development that exceeds a defined threshold (either budgetary or square footage). (page 55)

